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People Identified as Soviet Agents Are Reported to Have Quit C.I.A.

By STEPHEN ENGELBERG Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27 tration officials said today that people telligence Agency and that one of those implicated had fled the United States.

The officials, who asked not to be identified, would not say what positions had been held by the people implicated by the defector, Vitaly Yurchenko, a former senior K.G.B. official who defected to the West in July.

One official said those involved were "above the level of courier" and another described their posts as "operational."

A Congressional source said one C.I.A. employee described by Mr. Yurchenko as a double agent was in a position where "there might have been a significant loss." He said, however, that "I would not characterize it as a real high-level job.

One of Senior Men in K.G.B.

This source said that none of the Americans identified as working for the K.G.B. in the United States held a position comparable to that of Mr. Yurchenko, who was described as one of the most senior members of the Soviet intelligence service, or that of Oleg A. Gordiyevsky, the K.G.B. station chief

- Adminis- in London who defected last month. The Justice Department said in a identified by a K.G.B. defector as statement, "Yurchenko has not indi-Soviet agents had quit the Central Incated there are any employees of the C.I.A. working as Soviet agents.

Intelligence sources and an Administration official, saying that all those involved had left the C.I.A., left it unclear whether the employees identified by Mr. Yurchenko were contract employees or full-fledged officers.

The Associated Press quoted a Congressional source as saying that some of the former employees involved had quit the agency out of fear they would be exposed and had fled the United States. The source was quoted as saying that the number of K.G.B. agents described by Mr. Yurchenko as working for the C.I.A. was "more than one and less than six."

Mention of Other Defectors

Another intelligence source said Mr. Yurchenko's defection was one of a series of setbacks suffered by Soviet intelligence in recent months. One of these sources said there were other significant defectors whose identities have not been revealed. He would not elaborate.

A Congressional source said the C.I.A. did not consider the recent spate of Soviet defections to be linked to the rise to power of Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the Soviet leader. This source said Mr. Yurchenko has described his reasons

for defecting as "ideological."

Mr. Yurchenko, he said, was a rising figure in the K.G.B. and was able to enjoy many of the comforts that are offered to high Soviet officials but are not available to the general populace. He said that Mr. Yurchenko was nonetheless dissatisifed.

"This was not a case of adversity," he said. "It does not appear to have been done for selfish reasons, like not getting the job you want. It was not greed: He's not like those Americans who have sold out for \$50,000.

Another source familiar with intelligence matters said today that Mr. Yurchenko was considered to be one of the most significant defectors ever. An Administration official indicated that the defector carried in his head the identities of Soviet operatives around the world.

According to this source, Mr. Yurchenko was one of the most senior officials ever to defect to the West. He said the defector's rank put him among the upper echelons of the K.G.B., and that he was one of the top five officials.